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M.A.C.E. JOURNAL

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MICRO MAINFRAME DISK DRIVE

by MARTIN A. SIML

For the last month I have been the proud owner of a Micro Mainframe Disk Drive. I have been in computers for about 16 years (Field Engineer), but have first purchased my own personal computer eight months ago. One of the first Micro Mainframe advertisements came to my attention. I called them up and chatted with Marc Menz for about fifteen minutes, about the hardware. I was very impressed, and immediately ordered one for my brother, and myself.

My order was the second booked for the drive. After about six months I received one of the first units from them. I had been very impressed by their ads and the discussion that I had with Mark, would their drive hold up under examination?

The disk drive was about the same size as the Atari disk from the front, but about 3-4 inches longer. The case was of metal painted a cream white. I found the actual disk drive to be the new slimline style, allowing two disk drives to be mounted in the space of the normal Atari drive. On the back of the unit I found, the cable to attach it to the Atari, an Atari bus expansion port, a reset switch for the drive, two switch blocks for configuring the dirve, a power switch, a centronics parallel printer port, and an expansion connector.

The disk drive will run in either double, or single density and is completely supported by the Atari without patches in either mode. I found that if I put a double or single density disk, in the drive, it would automatically decide which it was (durring bootup) and there after read and write to that disk in the proper density. You can also select disk density under program or hardware control. Disks written in single or double density on either the Percom, or the new Atari 1050 disk can be read and written to by the drive.

There is a Centronics parallel printer port on the back with a 4K buffer. It works fine with my Prowriter. There is one quirk about the port however. Instead of using a standard Atari connection for the printer cable, they used the TRS-80 standard. So I had to buy my cable at the local Radio Shack. The buffer is upgradable to 38K.

The drive will support up to 7 additional drives, and they can be mixed or matched between 5 1/4 inch, 8 inch, or hard disks (single or double headed).

16 K of RAM for the Z-80 CPU controller, comes standard. It can be upgraded to 64K of RAM. Since the drive is intelligent, it can be programed from the Atari to do many things that no other Atari compatable drive currently avaiable will do. The possibilities are endless. Some of the things currently supported by the Micro Mainframe, are as follows.

CONVERT Allows files to be moved from one disk to another, regardless of density.

FAST COPY Allows one full disk to be copied to another formatted disk in about 45 seconds. (This works only on non-protected disks using a Micro Mainframe dual disk drive)

PRINT SECTOR Prints out a sector listing of all sectors present on a disk. (usefull in finding bad, and multiple sectors) It will also tell you what type of Data Address Marker was used.

PRINT TRACK Prints out a listing of all tracks found on a disk.

CHANGE DAM BYTE Allows you to change the Data Address Marker from a F8H marker to a FBH marker or back again.

DISASSEMBLE A machine language disassembler that allows you the option of dissassembling a disk file, Atari memory, or the boot sector of any diskette. It will do this to the printer or the CRT as desired and include a cross reference table if needed.

The above are the only software programs supported at this time. However, new programs are in the works including a program which will allow you to back up any disk. I am told that it will be a micro copier, and will back up anything that can be read by the drive.

The following commands from the keyboard are also supported at the present time.

CONFIGURATION this will allow you to reconfigure your drive directly from the keyboard.

REMOVE A DEVICE this allows the specified device to be removed.

DUMP RAM This will dump the resident RAM in the drive to the printer.

MODIFY RAM This will modify the bytes in the RAM of the drive.

READ TRACK This will cause the drive to dump to the printer the contents of any track specified. The dump will include the bits between the end of the sector and the sector header. It will also dump the sector header. In other words a complete bit by bit dump of any track on a disk.

BURN TRACK This command will completely destroy the specified track on a disk.

RESET Allows you to reset the memory and the CPU of the drive from the keyboard.

BAUD RATE SELECT Allows you to change the baud rate of the write clock under software control.

The above is all that is supported at the present time. However, since it is Z-80 based and can be used as another computer using Z-80 machine language many more things can be accomplished. The permutations are endless.

Further on down the line, Micro Mainframes plans include the following enhancements.

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Over all I find that my drive meets all my expectations and goes beyond. I am very satisfied with my drive, and recommend it to anybody.

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M.A.C.E. MEETING MINUTES

by William Black

APRIL MEETING

I'd better apologize right off the bat for two reasons: 1)These notes will be late getting to the newsletter editor because my disk drive died, and, 2) The public address system was so bad that I could hear but little of what went on.

Chet Gonterman awarded the library submission prize to Richard Kinsey for his work on Inside Atari Basic.

President Marshall Dubin remarked that the M.A.C.E. BBS has moved. The new number is (313)-544-0885

Qix was demoed by the Harrisons. One tries to cover the screen with squares one draws as Qix works against you with line destruction techniques. Its a challenging game.

Paul Wood, Taricon Chairperson, thanked all who volunteered. Help is still needed in the publicity area though. Also still needed are people with contacts in hardware and software areas, and people to run seminars.

Craig Chamberlain demoed three musical programs using Pokey Player. He also discussed some finer points relative to Shaptab.

Richard Staff demoed Cosmic Balance. It is a tactical simulation of interstellar war. You get to design your own ship as well as the enemies. The program requires 48K, disk drive, and patience. It can involve multiple players, individual commanders, and thirteen ships.

Russ Herschler announced that he is starting an adventure sig. His number is 559-3278.

The Circuit Lab program was demoed by its creators Mark Davids and Sheldon Leemon. The program features four circuit configurations in which to place lamps, meters, switches, and the like. The lamps vary in brightness in relation to current at respective positions within the circuit. Meters register current flow at respective positions also. The circuits are modified using the joystick. The program will be available through the A.P.X. Catalog or the M.A.C.E. library.

John Merle, Representative of MicroKey, demoed some early education educational programs.

The meeting concluded with the showing of several Atari videotapes featuring Chris Crawford.

MAY "BIRTHDAY" MEETING

Strains of "Happy Birthday" were heard in the Southfield Civic Center on May 17, 1983 shortly after the May membership meeting was called to order by President Marshall Dubin.

Atari Reps Earl Rice, Mark Cator, and Gretchen Nicholas were introduced. Earl patiently entertained numerous questions. A couple of the things that he mentioned that I felt were interesting were as follows:

1)The 850 interface is not being discontinued. It is merely lagging behind in production.

2)Enthusiasts are welcome to visit Atari Headquarters. User group support will meet with you. Advance notice is appreciated.

3)Earl knows of no new languages in the offing other than Logo.

4)Atari offers no plant tours either in the U.S. or Taiwan. We wish to thank User Group Support for being with us.

The following members were recognized for past service to the club:

Gary Luzier Program Director
Rodney Graham Tape Librarian
Sam Findley Disk Librarian
Judy Braun Treasurer
Sheldon Leemon Secretary
Carol King Newsletter Distribution
Paul Wheeler Library Submissions

Hawkins Family Grand M.A.C.E. Aces

We wish to thank Micro Station, Computer Cellar, Micro Chip, Riteway, Micro Key, and Educational Software for all of the help and support.

JUNE MEETING

The June 21st meeting of M.A.C.E. was called to order by President Marshall Dubin in the cavernous Southfield Sports Arena near the Southfield Civic Center. An error by the civic center staff resulted in the Pavillion being double booked, and MACE graciously acquiesced to the city's request for a change of venue.

Disk Librarian Chet Gonterman announced that the board has approved payment to members for copying library disks at thirty cents each, minimum one hundred disks. The new proprietary disk, Circuit Lab, by Mark Davids and Sheldon Leemon is now available. On disk #LA, Craig Chamberlain has submitted a revised Pokey Player with demo music and documentation.

Robert Brown and Ed LaMountain from Signature Software demoed a sound generation program. The program enables one to create and experiment with sound for use in basic or assembly language programs.

Paul Wood, Taricon Chairperson, still needs help in the advertising coordination department.

Arlan Levitan and Sheldon Leemon reported on the Chicago Consumer Electronics Show. See the June M.A.C.E. Journal for Arlan and Sheldon's writeups.

Bob Bigelow and Jim Goan of the 3 M Company lectured on the handling and storage of diskettes. We learned that diskettes are designed for use under reasonable extremes of heat and humidity. If a diskette is exposed to temperatures of over 78 degrees one should let it rest for 24 hours before use. Excessive heat and humidity, liquids, electricity, magnetic fields, and even oil from one's fingers can be harmful. Should your diskettte survive all of these hazards it ought to last quite a while. Three and one-half million passes per diskette is the industry standard.

We were informed of a few do's and don't's as follows. Do use a felt tip pen to label diskettes. Do not use a pencil eraser. Do remove the old label before applying a new one. Do watch out for ashes. Do not use apper clips or rubber bands to hold diskettes together. Do clean the heads periodically. Head cleaning diskettes were recommended and are not as abrasive as a regular diskette.

While flipping disks is not recommended most are usable for double sided operations.

Respectfully Submitted,
William Black

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SUSPENDED

by Michael Berlyn

Review by Arlan R. Levitan

Not busy tonight? Need to kill some time? How about being cryogenically frozen for five hundred years or so? That's only part of the scenario in Suspended, one of Infocom's newest titles in its unique line of text adventures.

Most experienced adventurers are already familiar with the Zork series of adventures, also produced by Infocom. Zork adventures are noted for their wit, complexity and attention to detail. Suspended continues that tradition and adds some new twists of its own.

Suspended is set on the planet Contra, and as the winner of a planet-wide lottery you have earned the dubious privilege of being stored in an underground bunker as a quasi-intelligent popsicle for the next half-century. You have been placed in an altered state of suspended animation, in which your mind is linked to a series of Filtering Computers that monitor Contra's critical life support systems.

You have been charged with safekeeping the planet's Weather Control, Food Production, and Transportation systems. Sounds harmless enough, eh? Well, not quite. Your predecessor, one Gregory Franklin, went just a bit wacko after only four hundred and sixty-seven years, and unleashed the robot-taxis on the surface on the general populace in a deadly game of chicken. Must have been an ex-New York cabbie. Franklin soon tired of this and created murderous ice storms that snuffed thousands of Contrarians before a SWAT team paid a visit and permanently retired him.

The Commission that selected you has chosen wisely this time. Although your pyschological profile did reveal a few characteristics which might be termed "deviant", you're a generally civic minded sort. Knowing that the authorities have a couple of replicant clones of yourself waiting in the wings tends to keep you that way too.

On being awakened by the monitoring system you find that the only way to examine and manipulate your environment is through six specialized maintenance robots.

Each is suitably named and you may issue specific instructions to an individual robot. Iris provides sight, Auda is your listening ear, and Whiz lets you talk to any one of four information peripherals that contain information on objects, helpful advice, and historical background.

The other robots are similarly specialized. Waldo is your workhorse, a grasping and manipulative type who would probably rather be an IRS agent. Sensa is the sensitive type; she (yes the robots seem to have gender here) can detect vibrations and radio emissions. Poet is the class act of the six! While posessing a very useful diagnostic sensor, most of the time his verbal descriptions of surroundings are akin to a spaced-out Tim Leary on a particularly heavy trip.

You must piece together information obtained from the individual robots to solve a multitude of problems. The one immediately at hand is that a minor earthquake has caused a bit of damage. Left unattended, the surface systems will soon go out of balance, and shorten the life span of both the surface dwellers and yourself. To complicate matters you will find that not all of your robot helpers are functioning properly either. Good luck! You're going to need it.

As in Zork, the entry of commands is extremely flexible. Rather than being limited to terse phrases like "get rod" or "go north" the internal parser of Suspended can recognize complex phrases like "Waldo, get the hollow container, put it under the table, and go to the Central Chamber."

For users with a printer, facilities for keeping a printed record of the proceedings are included, a valuable feature for those who don't like to make the same mistake twice.

Games may be saved and restarted, eliminating the need for re-hashing sub-scenarios that have already been solved. If you are clever enough to make it to the end without being replaced by one of your clones, there are two

advanced levels of play available: Expert and Impossible. The latter should keep you busy for a while.

Suspended's packaging is unique. A vacu-formed frozen mask with baleful eyes peers out of the box, imploring the software browser to shell out the $49.95 price of admission. To enhance the realism, you might consider wearing the mask and turning the home air conditioner to sub-zero levels. The instruction manuals are clear, complete and witty. A sturdy, high quality board is included, detailing the layout of the underground complex which is Suspended's micro-universe. Vinyl tokens, representing the six robots help you keep track of your metal minions whereabouts within the complex on the board.

The only thing that interferes with play is having to type out the name of each robot you wish to issue an order to. This becomes cumbersome at times, especially if you're a poor typist.

Suspended is a text adventure, and while some people may prefer graphics adventures, in all fairness, the current state of microcomputer graphics is still no match for the combination of well turned prose and the imagination of the mind.

Suspended is a challenge worthy of any seasoned Adventurer, providing a refreshing new scenario and a puzzle of logic guaranteed to keep you up well into the night. Consider acquiring it for your next quest into the unknown.

MACE UNCLASSIFIEDS

WANTED...I would like a listing of an AUTORUN.SYS program so that I can figure out how it works and how one can change the name of the program that automatically boots up. Also, how does one blank out the screen while player-missiles are being drawn, etc. so that the 'picture' appears all at once rather than in stages. Thanks. Write or call Judy Braun, 39281 Eliot, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043, 469-1128.

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DISK SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Baja Buggies, Caverns of Mars, Temple of Apshai, Crush Crumble & Chomp, Backup Master: $15 each. Action Quest, Match Racer, Galactic Chase, Canyon Climber: $10 each. Warlock's Revenge: $12. Scott Adams Adventures 1-12 (Gold Edition): best offer. Le Stick controller: $15. Call Brian (313) 544-1214.

LITTLE USED SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Microsoft Basic $45, Disk PAck 1000 Utilities $15, Pool 1.5 $15. All include original documentation. (313) 559-3310. ask for Jeff.

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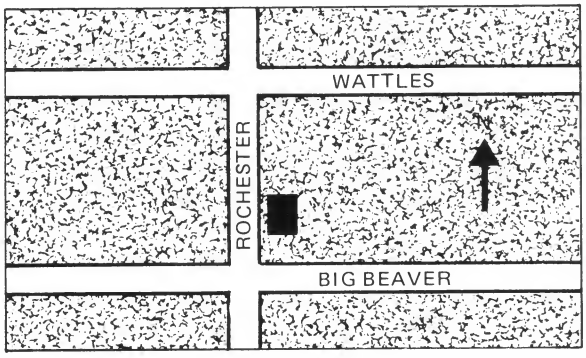

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The seminar will be held in August. It will last approximately two hours. All programs will be available for free - just bring a disk or cassette. Interested? Call the MACE Hotline (338-6837) after July 25th, for seminar date and place.

ALL ARE WELCOME - PLEASE COME

ASSEMBLER SIG

By Todd Meitzner, Secretary, SIGASM

June Meeting

This months meeting was attended by a larger number of people than last month including several people new to the sig group. We all introduced ourselves and went on with the meeting.

The talk this month was again by Tom Hunt and was about adding macros to a macro assembler. The macros Tom proposed were for IF type words, loop control type words, and CASE or multiple branch type words. These macros if used properly could make an assembler program easier to read and write.

Sheldon Leemon was also there and discused what he found out Atari would show at the CES show in Chicago.

At this meeting it was finally decided to elect new officers for the sig. Both Tom Hunt and Phil Heavin, who did an excelent job of serving the sig-assembler group, decided to step down and allow someone else to be elected. The new officers are Al Melocke as manager and Todd Meitzner as secretary.

August's Meeting

Although no firm place was yet obtained for the August meeting, will be as usual, on the first Thursday August 4th. It will start at 7:00 with socializing and the actual business portion begining at 7:30. Call Al Melocke at 775-6895 for the meeting location. Hope you are there.

MACE MEMBER WINS AT
METRO DETROIT SCIENCE FAIR

John J. Meyer, a senior at Warren Woods High School and a member of M.A.C.E., won a first place award at the prestigious 1983 Science and Engineering Fair of Metropolitan Detroit. John is the student of our membership chairperson Judy Braun.

John's project, "Synthesized Speech for the Handicapped", was judged in the Math and Computer Science category and was among the top 48 projects out of over 2000 entries. In his project, John combined the Alien Group's voice synthesizer with a customized keyboard version of an Atari 800. His purpose was to show that a home computer could be a viable and less expensive alternative for handicapped individuals without speech to the commercial products currently on the market. By pressing certain keys on the computer, the synthesizer 'spoke' the letter, word, or words of the user's choice.

We at M.A.C.E. are extremely proud of John's achievements and wish him continued success at Wayne State where he will pursue a degree in Computer Science.

Summer CES: Extended Coverage

The Consumer Electronics Show held last month in Cicago was extensively discussed on the Atari SIG of CompuServe. Here's a rehash of the message traffic on the SIG during the show for those of you without modems. Although some of the material was covered in last month's issue of MACE Journal, you should find an item or two of interest in the following transcript. If you are already a CompuServe subscriber, you can reach the Atari SIG by typing "GO PCS-132" from the main menu. Last December's issue of MACE contains full documentation for accessing the message board there.

#: 15629 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #CES Flashes
04-Jun-83 20:33:01
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: ALL

Well folks, who says vaudeville is dead? Coleco treated the press to a song & dance reminiscent of days gone by at at press conference held at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago tonite. Now the SAIC is a bit off the beaten track, and at 6PM a voracious mob of hungry and thirsty representatives of the press showed and were treated to a wide-screen multi-media presentation in dynamic stereo to boot. What was the ruckus about? Coleco unveiled (actually, most people, including myself didn't hang around for the no-iron percale sheets to be whipped off) their new ADAM computer system. ADAM is an 80K computer with built in stringy floppy type storage (500k), a detachable keyboard, and a 10 CPS daisy wheel printer, all for under $600. The announcement was greeted with little enthusiasm (the guy sitting next to me actually fell asleep during the thirtieth repetition of the word "innovative") as Coleco was unwilling to go into technical details and gave the distinct impression that technical information on the system would not be generally available. Their biggest mistake was without a doubt a failure to provide any form of liquid of solid sustenance. I mean after all, what are press conferences for?

#: 15630 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15629-#CES Flashes
04-Jun-83 20:39:09
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

Well we blew off the Coleco crowd at 7 and headed over to IMAGIC's by invitation only bash at Lake Pointe Towers, 70 stories above the riverfront. Very nice party with more than adequate beverage and toothsome morsels. All this for announcing a cooperative agreement between IMAGIC and Texas Instruments. IMAGIC will produce versions of it's entire line of popular games which will be marketed by TI itself. They may even throw in a free box of Jello pudding with each program. While the Atari versions of FLAP and Atlantis (for the 400 and 800) were not all that hot, their new MOONSWEEPER game has stunning graphics. My only complaint is that the quiche was a bit overdone. All in all, a class act.

#: 15631 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15630-#CES Flashes
04-Jun-83 20:44:32
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

The hottest topic at the IMAGIC party had little to do with video games. Seems that publishing giant CW Communications has purchased all of the Wayne Green (80-Micro, Kilobaud, On-Computing, et cetera) computer rags. For those of you who don't follow the trade, CW currently owns Computerworld, PC World, Infoworld, Office Automation and numerous other pubs. This show is heating up allready!!

#: 15633 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15631-#CES Flashes
04-Jun-83 20:48:25
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

Brian Russel of Softsel (one on the nation's largest software distributor's confirmed over our fifth Jack Daniels on ice that they have signed an agreement with KMART to rack-job hot software titles. Brian also let slip that a deal is iminent with food giant GEMCO. Top 40 software anyone? Be sure to check the cut-out bins (you know, the disks with the holes punched in the corner).

#: 15670 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15658-#CES Flashes
05-Jun-83 04:33:05
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

Coleco declined to say exactly what CPU ADAM is running, and to completely confuse things they claim that the system is CPM AND "Applesoft BASIC source code compatible." The technoid types in the crowd were really put off when company president Alex Greenberg (a verrrry smooth public speaker) informed us that "most home computers have to waste a lot of their power by polling add-on peripherals all the time to check on their status." OK Alex, if you say so. Other fun from the Coleco handouts: The main system unit communicates with the other system components via "ADAM-Net", and everything about the system is "SMART". It uses "SMART Basic", all of it's programs are "SMART Software", it's 10cps printer is a "SMART Writer", the database package is "SMART Filer"....the list continues ad nauseum. They did NOT announce a SMART Modem and probably don't even realize they'll be sued as soon as they do. An extremely critical piece of software is included in addition to the built-in Word Processor: The Official BUCK ROGERS AND THE PLANET OF ZOOM game. I mean my hangover is bad enough without all of this...

#: 15734 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari 600XL
05-Jun-83 23:25:34
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

Atari unveiled four new computers today, but the first one you'll see on the shelves will be the Atari 600XL. A little funny lookin', sort of like a 1200 with the rear half of the unit sawed off, the START, OPTION, SELECT, RESET, and HELP keys moved over to the right hand side of the low-profile console, and a cartridge slot stuck plumb in the center of the inch and a half or so of plastique above the top row of keys. While the full-stroke keyboard doesn't feel as nice as the 1200s does, it is much better than the VIC.
Technical specs? OK, here goes:
16K RAM standard
Built-in Atari BASIC (Rev 2)
Expansion bus connector in rear for external connection to the processor bus.
2 joystick ports

Announced price is $199.95. Upgradable to 64K with addition of a 48K expander unit (no price announced). Look for the unit in August. (EDITORS NOTE: LATE FLASH! SUPPLIER PROBLEMS HAVE PUSHED AVAILABILITY OF ALL XLs BACK BY TWO TO THREE MONTHS.)

#: 15735 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari 800XL
05-Jun-83 23:31:57
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

Looks almost identical to the 600XL, with just a tad more depth to the rear of the box.
64K standard
Built-in Atari BASIC
Two joystick ports
Composite monitor output
External bus connector

#: 15736 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari 1200XL
05-Jun-83 23:37:06
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: All

Conspicuous in it's absence from the show was our old(?) friend the 1200XL. While the list price has been cut to $499, and a $100 rebate offer to boot, Atari reps seemed to prefer talking about more important things, such as the weather, whenever the 1200 came up in conversation. Pick one up if you're interested in acquiring a soon-to-be-rare system.

#: 15737 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: Atari 1400XL
05-Jun-83 23:41:19
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: All

The new 1400XL is a dead ringer for a 1200XL on the outside. Still 64K, but BASIC built-in, as well as an integral 300 baud modem and a Votrax SCA-01 speech synthesis chip.Yes Virginia, it has an expansion bus also.

#: 15738 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari 1450XLD
05-Jun-83 23:48:21
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463

What do you get when you add a Tandon half-height, dual sided drive to a 1400XL? Why, a 1450XLD of course! Storage Capacity? 88K w/DOS 2.0, or 127K per side w/DOS 3.0. Total storage, 176 or 254K, depending on how you swing.

#: 15757 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari CP/M module
06-Jun-83 06:36:18
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276
To: All

One of the most interesting pieces of gear Atari is showing at CES is their CP/M module. The unit is based on a 4.0 MHz Z80 processor, has 64K of integral RAM, and composite video output that is switchable between 40 and 80 column display modes. The CP/M module will plug into ANY Atari via the serial Molex I/O connector. This is actually a complete computer without a keyboard; your Atari provides that. In case you haven't guessed, the unit will be available sometime in fourth quarter. No price announced at this time.

#: 15760 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: Lack of Pricing Info
06-Jun-83 06:42:22
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276
To: All

Don't be too discouraged about the lack of solid price info on a lot of the new product. We're talking about stuff which won't be released for some time and there is little point in giving away the store at this date to price slashers like Commode-Door. The stuff that's ready to ship shortly has been set, and that's it for the time being.

#: 15761 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #Atari 1050 Disk Drive
06-Jun-83 06:49:30
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276
To: All

The 1050 looks nice, sporting the 1200XL designer look....the slim profile is made possible by a single sided half-height Tandon mechanism. The unit is about 3/8 the size of the 810, which does not appear on the new price list. Storage capacity: 88K with DOS 2.0 127K with DOS 3.0. These units will ship shortly and are priced at a list price of $449. I like it, even though transfer rate is the same as the 810. So quiet that Sheldon actually had to hold his ear to one to make sure it was running!

Sb: Atari 1027 printer
06-Jun-83 07:02:43
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276
To: All

People still can't believe the $349.95 price Atari has set for their compact. Letter Quality printer. Although it didn't seem like the advertised 20CPS figure, I gotta admit that it works and the print quality is good. Prints an elite font at 12 characters per inch. 80 characters across on the sheet or roll paper the friction feed allows. Bi-directional print head that inks itself from a pad rather than using a ribbon. The head itself is five wheels with characters on the edges, kinda like five Lifesavers on a shaft. Sounds funny, but it seems to work.. No 850 interface required.

Sb: CES
06-Jun-83 18:17:43
Fm: STAN GOLDBERG 70645,464

hi folks...I'm sending you all this message from my hotel room at the airport in chicago...ahhh the model 100... I guess I've got to get my two cents in from the CES. The atari exhibition was quite a stir today and I must say I was really impressed. It seems like we are getting everything we asked for. The designer of the CPM box that attaches to all Ataris gives us 64K and a chance to use cpm software. I understand it is to cost around 450 and provides an 80 column display. It was up and running..wow. The top of the line, the 1450XLD with a built in disk drive contains a

Votrax sound chip, a direct connect modem, and a disk drive that has a capacity of about 254K. If you put in an old 88K disk, it will think it is an 810 and read it too. We get 64K ran,a 24K rom operating system with built in basic and telecommunications software. Atari says you will be able to add another disk drive. There is a parallel port to which you can akk add an expander box with two rs232 and one parallel port and eight slots for boards. Atari says they will encourage third party boards for the unit. The 1400 series which looks like the 1200 should be available around Dec. There was a super light pen with paint software as well as a graphics tablet. Both are accessible from basic. My greatest impression was the sense of new energy that has come over Atari. I was able to talk to Alan Kay, the chief scientist at Atari...He is really dedicated to making Atari the leader. By the way there is some new science class software and hardware which allows students to use the Atari as a scientific instrument with photocell and atemperature inputes...gasp..I haven't read other reports yet so I hope this is not entirely old hat.

#: 15779 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15761-#Atari 1050 Disk Drive
06-Jun-83 18:44:30
Fm: RON WINN 73145,340
To: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276 (X)

Will it be practical to use the 1050 with an existing 810. Will DOS 3.0 support both fully at the same time ? What about the rumor of copy protection built into DOS 3 ? Has ATARI said anything about discontinuing current items ? 400/800/810 etc. If so, how long will they support them ? Thanks to everyone for providing all this good stuff on CES. Hope it doesn't cut into the partying too much ?

* Replies: 15834, 15866

#: 15786 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15735-#Atari 800XL
06-Jun-83 19:14:32
Fm: MURRAY A. BARNETT 71365,2034
To: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463 (X)

What risk do you see in someone using the 600XL or 800XL and trying to push the HELP button and accidently hitting the POWER ON-OFF switch? That wouldn't be much help!

* Reply: 15867

#: 15800 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: CES SHOW
06-Jun-83 20:53:55
Fm: John A. Levin 70265,676
To: ALL - ANY

As I am writing this, I note that there are twelve people on the sig, so the response times are a little slow. I attribute it all to Atari's showing in Chicago. Our user group had its monthly meeting, fortuitously, today. Our one scheduled speaker, David Rhodes of Red Fox Enterprises, had just stepped off the plane from Chicago, with a fistful of pamphlets from the CES show, and a handful of impressions of the show. His summary:

Atari stole the show! (Atari corporate types will be astonished by the following laudatory description of the show offerings, since ... well never mind...) Atari has introduced a whole line of new and COMPATIBLE homecomputers, the top of the line appearing to be a unit which will be well nigh irresistible to the small business user. Atari appears to have trounced the opposition. Mr. Rhodes reports that IBM had nothing new to show (clapping from the user group members), Commodore had nothing to report, not even its CP/M add on, long promised but still evanescent (clapping and cheers from the user group), and Apple still has Dick Cavett, but nothing else to report (laughter, bad Dick Cavett impressions from the user group members). The highlights as I see them are the new drives for the 1450 XLD which are enanced density, double sided drives with a capacity of 254 K, the Votrax built in speech chip with bundled software enabling you to HEAR your input as it is typed in, the amazing $350 letter quality printer, the new graphics tablet, the very interesting 1030 autodial modem and the promised introduction of Donkey Kong Jr. and Ms. Pac Man and the fact that Atari Basic is now built in to all units and Microsoft basic is available on disk or cartridge. Other notes: Eastern Front and Caverns of Mars are being offered on cartridge

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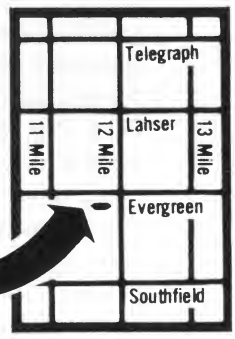

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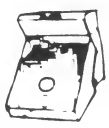

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too, as is Dig Dug and the regular Donkey Kong. My only other comment is that Atari appears determined to ruin me financially. Yippee!!!

#: 15807 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: ATARI GRAPHICS TABLET
06-Jun-83 21:53:20
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464
To: ALL

For those of you whose arm might fatigue holding a light pen to the screen Atari has a nice, small graphics tablet for you to draw on together with a sophisticated software package. Another excellent and inexpensive peripheral for the artistically minded. The touch tablet will retail at $79.95. The software included is on cassette.

#: 15810 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #ATARI 48K FOR 400
06-Jun-83 21:56:56
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Atari will now offer its own 48k upgrade for the 400. (Atari really has finally listend to us and started to look at the real world!) See your next issue of the APX catalog for details. It can be user installed...they actually include the instructions!!! But if you want it warranteed, you must have an authorized serivice center do the job.

#: 15813 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: ATARI CP/M
06-Jun-83 22:05:39
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Had a nice chat at CES with Peter Moss, president of Add-On Computer Corporation, designers of the new Atari CPM unit. The unit interfaces through the serial I/O and will work will all Atari computers. As you would expect, a Z-80 and 64k ram, but also included 80 col display. Expected price is uncer $500. Add-On hopes they promise, to make available just about any CP/M title you want in Atari format to run on CP/M. That means Wordstar, all the CP/M Calcs, DBase II.. you name it!!!. The unit was no dumb box...they had it up and running. It drew a lot of attention at the Atari booth, and well it should. I would also comment for all of you who are wishing for a 16-bit coprocessor that most of us using IBM PCs are simply running 8-bit software in a 16-bit environment which has little advantage over what your Atari will now be able to do. Until the newer integrated software that will run on 16-bit systems is more available (and priced for people other than Fortune 500 companies, it is of little benefit to have a 16-bit cpu, except perhaps for graphics (more colors in hi-res, etc.). The CP/M unit will really be a big help for the more business and professionally oriented user.

#: 15814 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: ATARI*LAB
06-Jun-83 22:11:44
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Atarilab is a neat new peripheral for Atari which has been developed by Dickenson College in association with Atari for an educational science program to be coordinated with the standard science textbooks used by school kids. The unit consists of the Atarilab interface which can be used to connect sensors, lights, and other scientific probing devices to an Atari computer. The starter set will also include a temperature module program ROM and a temperature sensor for conducting thermal experiments. Other modules currently under development include light, biofeedback, timekeeper, lie detector, and mechanics. The science series will form the basis of an integrated, comprehensive science curriculum for grades 4-12. Starter set retails at 89.95 and other modules will be under $50.00 a neat educational product.

#: 15815 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #AMDEK MICROFLOPPY
06-Jun-83 22:14:47
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Stopped by the Amdek booth to find out the status of the Atari implementation of the dual 3 inch unit. It is still alive!! Best estimates from Amdek are August availability with price for the unit, including controller, under $600. Not intended that much software will come on the 3 inch format, but the drives will give

people much better storage capacity for data files, or programs you can transfer as files.

#: 15816 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: SYN-APPS
06-Jun-83 22:17:42
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Also got a look at demos of the new Syn-Apps series of home-business applications programs for Atari being developed by Synapse Software. Looks quite impressive. Syn-Calc, Syn-File, Syn-Term, and Syn-Trend were all on display. Nice getting to meet Jon Loveless and Brian Lee. These products will enable many to do some serious work on the Atari without CP/M.

#: 15817 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: UPGRADES FOR 2600 VCS
06-Jun-83 22:22:33
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

One of the more spectacular new products from Atari is the voice unit for the 2600. This is not just a speech synthesizer, but a voice recognition unit that can learn sets of commands for any game, and in any language. When playing baseball, you can throw to third by simply saying "third base." Or you could name the catcher "Bench" and make a throw to Johnny Bench simply by saying "Bench". If you are playing Star Raiders you can get your shields up by saying "shields". Very impressive unit. No firm commitment regarding whether such a unit will also be made for 5200 and computer series, but given the impact this product seemed to be making many thought it was likely that models for the other hardware in the line would be developed. Price of the 2600 unit is expected to be under $100.

#: 15834 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15779-#Atari 1050 Disk Drive
07-Jun-83 06:47:04
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276
To: RON WINN 73145,340 (X)

400, 800, and 810 discontinued. Will check on DOS 3.0 today. No truth to hardware protection scheme as far as I can tell.

#: 15835 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: New Atari Spokesperson
07-Jun-83 06:58:18
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

Atari held back it's biggest surprise until Monday evening. I attended a function for Atari corporate staff on Sunday where Ray Kassar almost let the cat out of the bag. Kassar stated that a new spokesperson with "unimpeachable credibility" would be introduced at a special press conference at the Westin Hotel at 6:30 the next day. Well the joint was packed, the booze was flowin' freely, media types merrily munched away on shrimp, kibbe, crab legs, ribs, and innumerable other toothsome morsels. Well folks, you gotta believe that even a usually jaded press was floored when Alan Alda was introduced!!! Alda was sincere and candidly disarming. Everyone, and I mean EVERYONE was thrilled and grinning from ear to ear. Whatever sum of money was involved to acquire Alda for 5 years is immaterial.He's one of Hollywood's wealthiest personalities and YOU KNOW that this guy doesn't endorse stuff he doesn't believe in. This is the first time I've heard of him being involved with commercial products. Acknowledged to be a real coup for Atari! A great line of new products, and a great spokesperson for them!!

#: 15836 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: The Other Alan
07-Jun-83 07:00:43
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

Alda wasn't the only Alan at the press conference. Also ran into Dr. Alan Kay, Atari's chief scientist, munching on a barbecued rib. We briefly chatted about his former work at Xerox's PARC laboratories in Palo Alto, and he broadly hinted about some of his new stuff. "The problem at XEROX was that they didn't have the guts to bring our products to market" Kay stated. "The problem at Atari is trying to convince marketing to let us keep our new work in the lab until we feel we have a completely finished product. It's a refreshing change."

#: 15837 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: The New Atari
07-Jun-83 07:04:37
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

I don't want to sound like a commercial, but things at Atari ARE changing...there is an upbeat air to the people working at the Atari booth...marketing and technical people are talking to each other and LISTENING. Ray Kassar said it all Sunday night...."We've been arrogant in the past...we've been SOBs to deal with...that's OVER here and now." I'm almost totally convinced...I encountered openess, and genuine concern in almost every Atari employee I met. People who had never had time for me before TOOK time at this show. Al Sekel, chief of PR, has done his homework! Atari users can be proud of the company's new product line AND attitude!!

#: 15838 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: Electronic Arts
07-Jun-83 07:06:49
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

My nomination for the class act of the monday night party scene goes to young upstart Electronic Arts. A tastefull, relaxed setting at the luxurious Tremont Hotel, and good people to chat with. Steve Wozniak looked relaxed and rested from the frenetic pace of the last US festival, John Anderson and Owen Linzmayer from Creative Computing provided good company to boot, while David (I'm the Father of Home Computing) Ahl, swilled one Heinekin after another. The authors of EA's absolutely EXCELLENT new game MULE for the Atari shared a hot brandied cinammon coffe with us and discussed the finer points of play. Electronic Arts' general presentation, packaging and sincerity was well appreciated by the Atari cognescenti in attendance.

Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: Activision Party
07-Jun-83 07:09:12
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

Zoo scene of the night was Activision's blowout at the Ritz carlton. Over two thousand people were jammed into the ballroom and environs. Enough food to choke the Russian and American armies and software groupies looking for Bill Budge abounded. A couple of bands kept the noise level up at about 130 decibels so screaming was the general rule. As I staggered out I spotted Ihor Wolosenko of Synapse in a Hawaian shirt starting a Conga line. Had to go over to the Billy Goat Tavern on Lower Wacker Drive with Anderson and Linzmayer to regain my sanity. Cheezbuggah, cheezbuggah! Cheeps! No fries! Coke! No Pepsi!

#: 15850 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: New Atari Computers
07-Jun-83 18:09:30
Fm: Neil McCulloch 74065,1160
To: Any SYSOP

After reading all the joyous tidings about ATARI's new product line-up it may well be that my next computer will be the 1400XLD. Until now, it was about to be IBM or a clone of same (Columbia Data, Eagle, Compaq, Hyperion or some such. I was virtually convinced that WCI had lost its way and no longer derserved serious consideration. (None of this caused me to regret ownership of my 800 which I intend to keep for a good, long time).

Sb: #1050 DRIVE
07-Jun-83 19:21:15
Fm: Robert Ash 70645,431
To: SYSOP*ARLAN LEVITAN 70675,463 (X)

Arlan, will double density software for the 1050 also enable 810 to run double density? Do you know anything new about Rana 1000? Rana also was software to run double density. Do you think their's will run on an 810? Does double density on 1450XL require special software like 1050?

* Reply: 15872

#: 15862 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15761-#Atari 1050 Disk Drive
07-Jun-83 19:48:25
Fm: Rich Beaty 71415,1752
To: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70001,1276

Any news on what the 810 will be after the

1050 gets out???

* Reply: 15873

#: 15866 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15779-Atari 1050 Disk Drive
07-Jun-83 20:14:57
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: RON WINN 73145,340 (X)

Talked to Vince Wu of the hardware group today. He said DOS 3.0 will support mixed 810 and 1050 drives (enhanced density with 1050 only though).

#: 15867 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15786-Atari 800XL
07-Jun-83 20:16:13
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: MURRAY A. BARNETT 71365,2034 (X)

There is no power switch on the front panel, only a red LED pilot light. The power switch is on the back of the unit. I'll admit that it's not quite clear from the photos of the unit. Also, don't be surprised if you see a double sided version of the 1050 next year.

#: 15869 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15846-#Atari 1050 Disk Drive
07-Jun-83 20:23:04
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: Bernie Bildman 70045,665 (X)

A new revision of Atari Basic is built in to the 600. No definite price set for the 48K upgrade, but it WILL be under $100.

* Reply: 15876

#: 15871 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15851-COMPATIBILITY???
07-Jun-83 20:26:58
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: Dave Schambach 72405,442 (X)

Although Atari's official position at the show was that there may still be some compatability problems (which they stress, AREN'T their fault) I gotta feeling there may be a change or two to the 1200 OS in these new machines.

#: 15872 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #15859-#1050 DRIVE
07-Jun-83 20:32:02
Fm: SYSOP*Arlan Levitan 70675,463
To: Robert Ash 70645,431 (X)

I think the pricing of the 1050 really pre-empts the RANA drive. RANA was conspicuous in their absence at the show, and I feel it will still be some time before they deliver. Enhanced density via DOS 3.0 will only work with the 1050, as it requires the 1050's new controller circuitry. As for Micro-Mainframe, I haven't seen any in stores, just heard via word of mouth from a couple people who ordered direct a long time ago (EDITORS NOTE: See Review of Micro-Mainframe Drive elswhere in this issue of MACE Journal). By the way, you may see 1050s in the shops by the end of July (hope, hope).

#: 15805 Sec. 9 - C.E.S. 1983 !!!
Sb: #ATARI LIGHT PEN
06-Jun-83 21:49:22
Fm: ROB GORDON 70435,464

Just returned from CES as guest of Atari...one of 10 user group presidents invited. Watched a great demo of new Atari light pen while standing right next to and chatting with Steve Ross, chairman of the board of Warner. He was just as amused and delighted by the demo as I was. Yes folks, the light pen lives and is a considerable improvement over the unit Atari almost introduced nearly two years ago. It is a much refined product and will come with a sophisitcated software package. It is no bigger than a small ballpoint pen and works much more smoothly than the older prototype. Should retail for under $100 including software.

**** END OF MESSAGES ****

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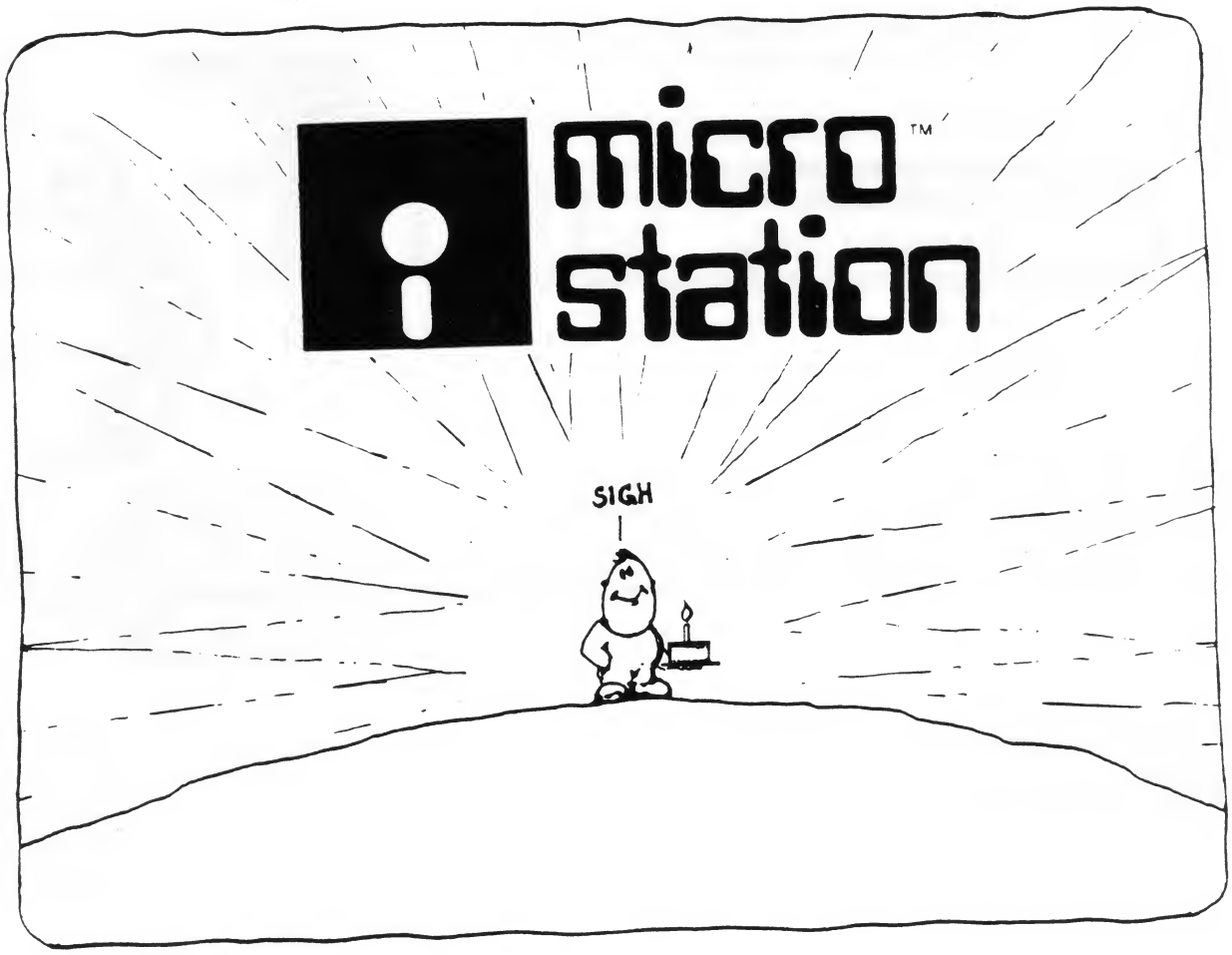

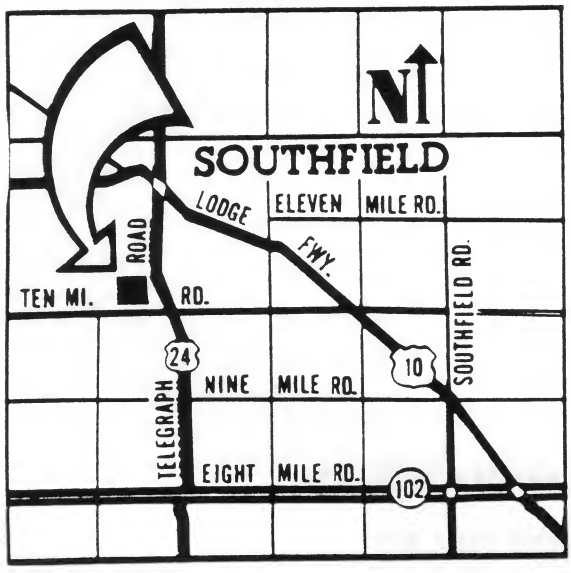

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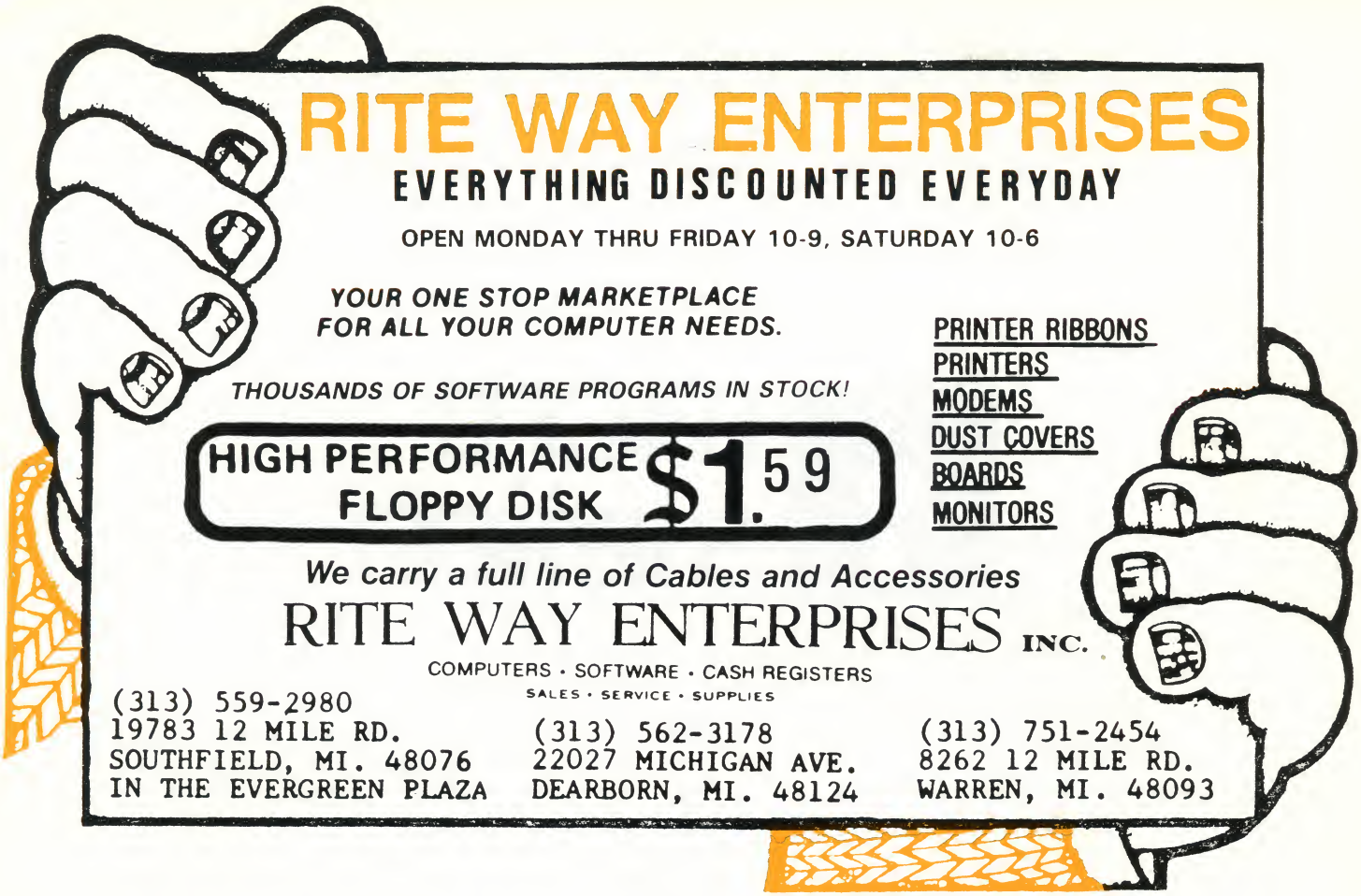

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